

Wigton Motor Club Ltd

Start Line

Issue: 01/14

www.wigtonmc.co.uk

January 2014

WMC Wins Club of the Year!

We have won the JLT MSA Motor Club of the Year for 2013, the prize is a large goblet and £1000 to be presented at the MSA Night of Champions at the PRAC Club on January 18th. We have previously won the competition in 2005 and have been “placed” on another four occasions.



JLT MSA Club of the Year

Diary

Club events over the next month or so

“Rush”

The spectacular film about Nikki Lauda and James Hunt.

At the Kirkgate Cinema
Cockermouth

Monday, January 13th at 8pm

Tickets £5 (concessions £4)

*The bar opens at 7.30
A special WMC promotion!*

WIGTON MOTOR CLUB LTD

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Talking Point

Topical comment from the world of motoring

Firstly a big thank you to all the members who contributed to a fantastic year in 2013 which resulted in us winning the JLT MSA Motor Club of the Year for 2013. We had some cracking events with the two historic rallies getting big entries, the Show getting bigger by the year and for once getting decent weather. The evening autotests and pub runs were well supported and Start Line gets better all the time due to the quality of the contributors. We did suffer from lack of organisers for a couple of autotests at the end of the year and we were thin on marshals at Kames. The challenge for this year is to get more folk organising and marshalling.

They say the rate of change doubles in speed every ten years. There is no doubt that the way we buy things has changed dramatically in recent times. I've not visited the centre of Carlisle for perhaps three years but there was a time when it was "done" every fortnight. There is just no need to now. A few clicks on the computer and your item arrives the next day.

Will car buying change? Paul hints at this in his article this month. Do dealers really need the glass palaces the manufacturers force them to have? God knows what the heating bill is for some of them! I recently accompanied our Laura to buy a new i20. With previous research and recommendations, we were only in the show room for about 40 minutes including a test drive. A couple of days later she picked up her new car. She will probably not need to visit the dealership again as it will be independently serviced.

I have a vague recollection that at one point Asda were going to sell cars and actually displayed Peugeots in their stores but the RMA kicked up a fuss and Peugeot opted out. Will we buy cars via the internet and cut the dealer out completely? If you can do it with everything else why not cars? A few years ago Virgin did try this but failed to reach targets but perhaps it was ahead of its time? Or on the other hand will dealers cut back and operate a lot more simply?

Perhaps the biggest disappointment of the past year was the resignation of Nick Bunting as Chief Executive of the MSA. He had made an immediate impression on clubs and officials as a guy who not only listened but was prepared to get things done and he did start the much needed reforms of the way our sport is run. Why he left has never been made clear but according to the interweb the establishment (known as "The Blazers") were unwilling to hand over power and make the sport more democratic. If so that is very sad and not good for the future of the sport.

GTF



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The opinions expressed in this issue of Start Line are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Club

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Annual Awards Dinner

19.00 for 19.30

Saturday, January 25th

At the
Skiddaw Hotel, Keswick

Guest Speaker

Nicky Grist

Raffle - prizes welcome

Tickets £29

from David Agnew 01946 841455 or DAVIDWAGNEW@aol.com

Dress code: Smart (gentlemen - jackets, collar and ties please)

**The Skiddaw is offering special rates for members
staying over, ring *freephone* 0800 840 1243**

LE JOG photos

(Land's End to John O'Groats)



BYGONES

Anecdotes

I've often thought about writing a book about motorsport in Cumbria and the many interesting and amusing incidents that have happened over the years. Many were reported in my local newspaper columns but of course some were not at the time suitable for the public domain!

Many members will not be aware that the Club was originally called the Wigton and District Motor Cycle and Car Club and it was not until the mid sixties that the name was changed. Bike events continued into the mid seventies with "scrambles" (what we know as motocross) and trials being very popular. The area to the south of Wigton and onto the Caldbeck fells provided most of the trials venues while the Club was ahead of its time in leasing land south of Rosley as a scrambles venue.

It was obviously much easier to get land for events and no one ever complained about the many sites used on the open fells. For a few years there was an annual inter club car trials competition between the VSCC and the USSO (the club that later became Workington & DMC) which was a vintage versus modern event. I can't imagine the National Park or the "Friends" being too happy about an event like that now!

Of course not all the Clubs were RAC affiliated then and most of those who were tended to ignore the rules they did not like! I think as a general rule any event on private land was not held to RAC regulations! There were a fair few clubs that came and went in the seventies and eighties. Some folk were not keen on the RAC and formed new clubs when the existing clubs affiliated. Clubs like Dalton, John Peel, Black and Reds, Keswick, Blue Ramblers, Cumbria Phoenix, Eden Valley and Fell-side all came and went, the later two not being related to the more recent clubs of that name.

One of the first events I did was run by Peter Huntington and was a full day's tour of the Caldbeck Fells with a trials section here, an autocross there and a driving test (autotest) there with a perhaps ten tests punctuated with lunch at the pub in Caldbeck. Great fun and everyone mucked in and help mark out the tests.

It was not uncommon for local enthusiasts to meet up at Huntington's Garage in Wigton on a Saturday afternoon and tweak our Minis and take them for a blast. The usual test run was from Wigton south via Red Dial and Parsons Bridge, up the twisty Cat lands Hill and into the quarry and hand-brake round a cone that was always there and back to Wigton. One rather misty November day we were doing this and I was the first away, very proud of the two big Cibies on the front of my 1275 Mini. It got progressively foggier as I went up the hill and into the quarry, where I found a car parked beside the cone. The occupants were obviously enjoying each others company as the car was well steamed up! It must have put them off their stride with a lot of noise and light suddenly appearing! Anyway I continued at unabated speed back down the hill passing the next car on the way up. In the meantime the occupants of the car in the quarry had presumably regained their composure and resumed mutually gratifying activities only to have a further assault of a rally Mini spinning round them! By the time the fourth car reached the quarry they had given up and were driving out the quarry. As luck would have it the driver of the fourth car recognised the driver of the car in the quarry and the other occupant and realised that perhaps they should not have been in a remote quarry together!

In the eighties stage rallying was hugely popular and WMC ran six stage rallies a year, four single

was possible but we had the enthusiasm and the manpower then and of course all the other clubs were happy to man a stage. There was never any problem with getting full entries in those days and even with the postal system a full 60 car entry for a single venue event in a week was the norm.

Such was the enthusiasm of competitors that some adopted some unusual and illegal methods of funding their rallying. Suffice to say that some had an enforced holiday and some managed to avoid it! What happened in Cumbria is worthy of a book but a couple of other anecdotes are worthy of mention here. A number of drivers down in Lancashire were rather naughty in the car ringing business and had their collars felt. Many of them had done WMC events so I knew them. Some years later in the nineties we were on holiday in Portugal and came across the start of local national championship event at a marina. Of course we stopped for a look see! I thought there were quite a few English voices and then realised there were some faces I knew. It seemed that the Lancashire "mafia" were now running and preparing cars for Portuguese and Spanish drivers and were living in Spain.

A similar story applies to a driver who was once on the verge of a works Peugeot drive. Unfortunately he had been a bit naughty and at one point was chased by the police through five counties. He sunk below the radar after that, career ruined. As we now spend some time in Bulgarian I had been trying to find out about Bulgarian motorsport and there are a fair few videos of events there. It was interesting to see that the aforesaid drivers name on a number of cars. It would seem he now supplies and prepares car for the Bulgarian and Romanian rally championships.

It would seem that rallying in Bulgaria is on the up as I looked at the Bulgarian ASN website and the lead article is how the top team in Bulgaria has just taken delivery of a new Fiesta R5 from M Sport! It's a small world these days!

Of course race and rally car transporters are also ideal vehicles for carrying illegal substances through customs as they have so many compartments and machines in them. One of the more bizarre was successful British driver Tony Dean entered the CAN-AM series which meant his Lola T70 and spare chassis had to go back across the Atlantic many times. This was quite an expense if you did not have a sponsor. By good fortune he discovered that high quality Havana cigars fitted in the chassis tubes of his spare car. By less good fortune he got rumbled and did time.

Another notorious drug smuggler was Vic Lee who ran the BMW Team in the BTCC with some success. However, the company was liquidated when Lee and others were convicted of importing drugs hidden in their race transporters worth £6 million, suspicions having been raised due to the number of times the team found it necessary to test at the Zandvoort circuit in Holland. Lee received a sentence of twelve years' imprisonment in 1993. On parole in 1998 he started up again and ran the Peugeot team in the BTCC and some rallying. In 2005 Lee was again charged with Jerry Mahony and two others and convicted of drug trafficking offences, when £1.7 million worth of class A drugs was discovered in the boot of his car, in which he received again, twelve years imprisonment.

On a lighter note Michael Schumaker once smuggled a cat across European borders in the Benetton transporter. During practice he noticed a stray cat in the paddock and fed it each day. At the end of the racing he was concerned as to its wellbeing and arranged for it go via the transporter to the next race from where it flew it to home in his private jet. Michael is a great animal lover and has many pets. For a while he brought his favourite Westie to events despite the ban on dogs at races. At one event he was driving in and met Bernie who said "No dogs in here,". MS replied "Do you want me to race tomorrow?" Nothing more was said.

The Benneton team at that time was run by Flavio Briatore who had his own suite in the hospitality unit. Flavio only appeared on race days so the Westie lived in the suite for the rest of the time. Unfortunately Flavio turned up unexpectedly and a mild panic ensued. Flavio being a bit of a dandy had a pair of silk embossed slippers under his bed. It would seem that the Westie had found another use for them (I always thought Westies were very good judges of character!). Flavio found his slipper a little damp and the team explained it as a leak in the recent heavy rain.

GTF

Classic Column

News from the Classic Scene

The Club marshalled on LE JOG in December at Gretna Gateway. After finding the right car park and then finding it was locked we got under way just in time for the first car to arrive. The entry on this event is always a bit different to other big classic events with few well known names taking part. The level of competitiveness is very varied with some crews doing their utmost to win and others taking a very casual approach. Indeed some down even both doing all of the tests; 52 cars left the overnight halt in Carlisle, 50 reached the first test at Longtown and 48 reached us!

There was an interesting mix of cars as well with some large Mercedes and the like which were ideal for a long trip but not for the tests! The most unusual was Talbot Tagora driven by a French crew. By a co-incidence I picked up this on a race forum from the owner.



As I'm the driver of **Paul, the blue Tagora** I can tell you something about him. I pushed Paul very hard from Land's End to John O'Groats, in any of the 2 dozen slalom-tests he had to work hard. His favorite instead are those small curvy ways in the hills and down to Carlisle where he followed the 944 and the 911 very close, so close, that we hardly managed to break down, when the both Porsche's were seriously trapped by a Traffic camera in a 30mph-zone. Gently he was driven in the 2 dozen regularities, just as any other starter did: You have to obey at any part of the long journey your own time gaps. Being too early = penalties, being too late = penalties. And as we were the latest starter with #73, we had to be the latest to

arrive at any point of the route, except of those, who failed or didn't find the right way. We finished at last on place 33 (not too bad for the first time rallying ever, isn't it?). And in the final results especially under "penalties road" we finished 12th over all and 1st in our class! For all the 6.350 km from Munich and back we added 3 times 0,5 Liter Oil. THAT is reliability, no racing! (Thank god we had no snow...) Sorry, back to the topic: To go racing with one of my "unsuitable" Tagoras isn't the worst idea. But therefor I would take the SX with his wonderful 2,7L-V6-PRV-engine topped with 2 Weber-Carbs (only to find in former Ferrari 365 and Porsche 911) that make him 166hp strong and a real acceleration-Monster. Any time you pull the throttle, you cannot take the smile from your face!! This is no tuned car, this is all serial (the fastest French saloon at its time 1983).

Another oddball a VW



Lake District Hotels
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PG Tips

So it's the end of the year already and a fair sign that I'm getting older because this year has gone in the blink of an eye! If I were doing a car review of the year I'd say that I have changed cars a number of times, Snotty got slightly quicker and a bit broken then fixed and I picked up another old Skoda which I seem to have successfully fixed up. So all in all I have moved slightly forward in car world.

Right now though Snotty has a big misfire.....50% cylinder firing failure which is almost certainly something to do with the fuel and air failing to ignite in number 1 and 2 cylinders! It has spark and fuel so it's a leak of some description which needs someone better than me to look at it. In the dark days of December I also set about removing all the chrome to match the new gold wheels, so by the time anyone sees it the whole car will be green, black or gold. Next year I may change my mind and put it all back! Hopefully next time I write this column it will all be good again and the new trick gearbox with LSD should be in situ.

On a brighter note, Ugly the Skoda is running like a dream.....well it is if your dream is an old communist era Skoda that sounds like a sewing machine and bobs along at a sedate but amusing pace on B roads. I changed the head gasket the other week because I had an inkling that the coolant in the system wasn't evaporating at a rate of half a litre per 300 miles and the problem now seems to have ceased, and the engine seems to run slightly sweeter as well. My previous experience of head gaskets going has always involved jets of boiling water and temperature gauges off the scale! I also passed a milestone in my ownership of the car by completing my third successful overtake – a Ford Ka being driven at under 40 mph on a national speed limit road near my house....it took careful planning, nerve, courage, a heavy right foot and a long clear stretch of road. It felt good though!

On the club news front I have to praise our new club membership scheme which has been farmed out to a paid non club member. Membership has been a big burden on whoever has had it and finding a volunteer to do it has proved difficult. The new scheme seems to be super efficient with Jaime sending my membership card out virtually by return. I don't think it has ever been as quick.

In the bigger world of motorsport I need to urge every single member of the club to sign the on line petition to save the Brighton Speed Trials which have been running since 1905 and are the oldest motorsport event in Britain. The current majority Green party council are looking to stop the event for good and will be doing so towards the end of January if something isn't done. The event didn't run in 2013 following the unfortunate death of a competitor in 2012 and the council seem to be viewing this break as a good time to pounce. At the time of typing the petition has over 4000 signatures and the momentum is building. I urge everyone to sign the petition and stop the tree huggers from destroying a piece of British motorsport history.

The petition only takes a couple of minutes to register for and sign and can be found here –

<http://present.brighton-hove.gov.uk/mgEPetitionDisplay.aspx?ID=410&RPID=11175561&HPID=11175561>

I hope you have all had a good Christmas and enjoy new year...as I said last year, I will hopefully be at more events next year!

Peter

Brockbanks Solicitors Cross Border Speed Championship 2014

Rounds

EACC	Kames	April 13 th
MGCC	Scammonden	May 18 th
YMC	Teesside	May 26 th
KLMC	Barbon	June 15 th
MSCC	Forrestburn	June 29 th
CMC	Three Sisters	Aug 3 rd
MGCC	Anglesey	Sept 6 th
MGCC	Anglesey	Sept 7 th
BARC	Harewood	Sept 20 th
BARC	Harewood	Sept 21 st
WMC	Kames	Oct 5 th

Pre Season Speed Test Day

Sunday, March 23rd 1-4 pm

At Rowrah Kart Circuit

£45 per car.

Entry forms on the website.

MG Cumbria

Roof of England Challenge

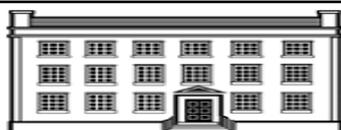
WMC Members invited

Sunday, March 30th

140 miles in the highest Pennines

Starts from Reghed

Entry forms on the website.



**Brockbanks
Solicitors**

Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Maryport, Workington and Keswick (as Oglethorpe & Broatch)

Christmas Cracker Run

The MG Cumbria Famous Christmas Cracker Run is now quite an institution in the North as it is the only touring event in the winter and is a friendly fun event that attracts families who perhaps don't do other events.



Starting as usual at the Reghed Discovery Centre near Penrith the crews were able to sign on and pick up their road book packs before having a coffee and viewing the shops and exhibitions at the Centre. As the cars began to set off at 10.00 a local band struck up some festive music. The judging of the best decorated cars and crew was done at the start just in case the rigours of the run took their toll on the decorations.

There was a wide variety of cars taking part as we don't restrict entry to just MGs; there are other fine cars as well! Indeed one or MG owners chose to come in their more regular cars so more family members could attend.

The first part of the route took the cars to the east of the Lake District boundary and then towards Carrock Fell and through the ford at Calebrack where the official photographer was stationed. From there the route went via Heskett New Market and to the south of Caldbeck along the Fellside road on Caldbeck Fell where John Peel once hunted and past Lord Melvyn Bragg's home.



The cars were seeded in age order with the oldest car, the 1928 Austin of John Meek leading the way. The drop down past Overwater provided great views in the good weather of Bassenthwaite Lake. This brought the crews to the first check point at Bewaldeth where each team were asked to identify four current Grand Prix drivers in one minute. The results were varied to say the least!

It was quite a short run from there to the second check point where there was more identification questions this time on cars. Surprisingly the MG 3 foxed most of the crews!

The second hour of the tour saw the route head over their three northern passes of Whinlatter, Newlands and Honister. The weather was good and only a couple of crews had any mechanical issues. The Honister section was the same used on the Tour of Britain cycle race back in September.

Dropping down from Honister quarry there were superb views of Borrowdale and Derwentwater and the final part of the route used the road on the west of the Water which is high above the lake and the boats look like toys, even the ones carrying Santa.

Reaching the village hall at Braithwaite the crews were welcomed with their finishers slates and an excellent meal while much banter took place and the awards presented.

The Best Dressed Crew were the that of Robin Bell; the Best Decorated car belonged to Daniella Hope (A Tiger dressed as a reindeer!) ; Peter Houghton got the most on the F1 Drivers questions and Roger Smith was the best at Car Identity. The Furthest Travelled Award went to Stewart West all the way from the Isle of Wight and the Overall Winner was John Horton.

The crews then headed off into Keswick for the Victorian Christmas Fayre vowing to be back next year.

GTF

Elderly Utterances

The Voice of Experience!

Ron Palmer has his say

April 2014 sees the seventh running of the GALLOP, which for those who haven't come across it is the club's three day tour for crews of classic and sporting cars of any age. Details were first published about three weeks ago and we have 21 paid entries as this is written just before Christmas and with four months still to go. This year we will be based at the Blackwell Grange Hotel at Darlington for two nights where a block of 30 rooms has been reserved for our group with only 9 left. So if you are thinking of giving it a try this year give me a call or drop me an e-mail for full details. Dates are 25/26/27 April and you can contact me on 01228 575153 or e-mail ronpalmer777@hotmail.com

I am obliged to Eddie Farrell for access to his archive of results and regulations from the '70s and '80s. For someone who peddled the Myers and Bowman Avenger with such verve and considerable success in rallies how and why Eddie made the discipline change to Historic Sports Car racing is a mystery to me. I suppose with the passage of time a few gentle laps of nice smooth tarmac in an E-type is preferable to the combat conditions of rallying.... Among the mountain of paper he supplied were the start lists and results for dozens of rallies throughout the north and other club events (mostly West Cumberland and USSO) and although I thought my records were pretty comprehensive my copier was panting a bit by the time I'd filled some gaps. Among the names it was good to see that many of the current committee and club members were competing then and are still doing so today. Now if they had decided to play rugby or soccer their competitive days would have been over some years ago, good choice motorsport!

Dog walking with Oscar our six month old Labrador often takes us to Finlandrigg a woodland walk which lies mid way between home and Kirkbride. Things must be busy at M-Sport at the moment as the WRC Fiestas are prepared for action on the 'Monte' which starts the new programme on 14th January and they can be clearly heard being put through their paces on the airfield some 4 miles away - sweet music to these ears. It was good to see that Matthew Wilson brought out the Fiesta R5+ on the Grisedale Stages and finished convincingly ahead of the pack. The current crop of M-Sport Fiestas in various guises has been a huge commercial success throughout the World for Malcolm with production reaching incredible numbers for what is a specialist hand built car. Regrettably the vast majority are being sold and rallied elsewhere in the World with sales in the UK relatively small. Watch out for the FIA World GT3 Blancpain race series in 2014 as Team M-Sport Bentley campaign their new Bentley Continental GT. For previous followers of this series on terrestrial TV, M-Sport's involvement adds a whole new dimension not to be missed.

We can be sometimes critical of our club and it's all put back into sharp focus when such an accolade as the JLT MSA Motor Club of the Year is awarded to Wigton MC for 2013 – and that follows the award in 2005. Hearty congratulations to every single member and a Happy New Year in 2014.

Ron.



RACING LINES

News from the Circuits

There is much speculation that Bernie's reign as the controller of F1 is about to end. He is currently on trial in London in a very complex case regarding the sale of F1 to a private equity company. Somehow a middleman was given a large sum by Bernie as part of the deal. That gentleman is now detained in a German prison. Can Bernie wriggle out of this one? It would seem that even if he does "get off" it may be time for his now employers to seek a replacement. He can't go on for ever! Christian Horner has been suggested but has denied any interest and why would he want to hassle?

One of the more interesting stories about Bernie was that he was involved in the Great Train Robbery! Around that time he was a back street car dealer who occasionally raced or allowed others to drive his cars. Some time after the GTR he appeared rather more wealthy and bought the Brabham team. The suggestion is that we either bankrolled the robbery and/or supplied the cars. The further connection is that the getaway driver, Roy James a reasonably successful racer, was an associate of Bernie. When James got out of jail he asked Bernie for a job and as he was a skilled silversmith Bernie got him to make a trophy for the constructors championship. That award is still used today and is sitting in the Red Bull HQ in Milton Keynes. Bernie has been asked about the link but has never denied it....

This year in F1 and in UK racing there will be penalties for going outside the white lines designating the course. Over the years tracks have been marked by straw bales, oil cans and more recently by kerbs. The problems with kerbs is that ones high enough to act as a deterrent for some cars can do great damage to the underside of other cars that go over them inadvertently and some can get beached and unable to proceed. It will certainly mean more work for marshals and the stewards while no doubt many drivers will be sitting on the naughty step!

It looks as though Mallory Park has been saved for racing with a new leaseholder in place. It would seem that the previous lease holder seriously abused the agreement as to how many events were held there.

Sadly it would seem that there won't be any racing at Leyden Hill after the local club pulled out citing falling grids making meetings unviable. Can Lydden survive only on the odd rallycross event? Interestingly Lydden was once owned by McLaren who planned to build their HQ there with a ready made test track but after some years that plan fell through and they built their space age HQ at Woking and sold on the track.

Both Dario Franchetti and Alan MacNish have announced their retirements recently. Neither is a household name but both have been tremendously successful and probably have done better financially than had they been in F1. Dario got pretty near a F1 drive when he drove for Jackie Stewart and Alan did drive the first Toyota F1 car but they thought the car's lack of success was due to the drivers and not the cars so changed drivers regularly. The Toyota team never won a GP.

Dario went to America and had huge success in Indy car with championship wins and Indy race wins. Alan concentrated on sports cars and scored many wins including Le Mans and last year won the World Sports Car Title. Both are great sportsmen and are active with the Scottish Motor Racing Club. Dario has a huge collection of Jim Clark memorabilia. It would be good to see them both honoured by the nation.

It looks as though Dario's cousin Paul De Resta is out of F1 as his team needs a pay driver and he could well head over to the USA to take over Dario's drive in Indy car.

NESCRO Rallies 2014

Saltire Classic Rally (C, E & N)		Saltire Rally Club Ltd	2nd March
Event Type	Tests, Regularities and Pre Plot Navigation		
Location	Birnam, Perthshire		
Contact	Colin Wallace	07443 573155	saltireclassicroally@btopenworld.com
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.saltireclassicroally.co.uk	

Devils Own (C, E & N)		Kirkby Lonsdale MC	March 15th
Event Type	Tests Regularity and optional Run		
Location	Kirkby Lonsdale, Cumbria		
Contact	Mike Kirk	01539 728832	MIKEKIRKRALLYING@aol.com
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.klmc.org.uk	

North Yorkshire Classic (C, E & N)		York Motor Club	TBA
Event Type	Tests & Regularities		
Location	York, North Yorkshire		
Contact	Simon Parson	07814546886	s.h.parson@ed.ac.uk
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.yorkmotorclub.co.uk/	

Ilkley Jubilee Rally and Run (C, E & N)		Ilkley & DMC	13th April
Event Type	Tests, Regularities and Navigation with Alternative Run		
Location	Ilkley, Yorkshire		
Contact	Henry Carr	01274 586461	carrh@btinternet.com
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.jubilee-rally.org	

Pirelli Historic Stage Rally		Cumberland Sporting CC	3rd / 4th May
Event Type	International & Historic Stage Rally		
Location	Cumbria, Borders		
Contact	Brian Huddleston	01768 483292	brianhuddle-
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.pirelliinternationalrally.co.uk	

Berwick Classic (C, E & N)		Berwick & District MC Ltd	3rd / 4th May
Event Type	Tests & Regularities		
Location	Berwick upon Tweed / Whitekirk		
Contact	Stuart Bankier	01289 382025	stuart@sbankier.wanadoo.co.uk
Website	www.nescro.co.uk	www.berwickmotorclub.co.uk	

The Shaw Trophy Classic Rally (C, E & N)		Whickham & District MC		15th June
Event Type	Tests, Regularities & Navigation			
Location	Morpeth, Northumbria			
Contact	Guy Wickham	01661 886845	guy.wickham@btinternet.com	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.wdmc.org.uk/		

Lake District Classic (C, E & N)		Wigton Motor Club Ltd		29th June
Event Type	Tests Simple Navigation in advance and no timing on public roads.			
Location	Penrith and North Cumbria			
Contact	Ron Palmer	01228 575153	ronpalmer777@hotmail.com	
Contact	David Agnew	01946841455	davidwagnew@aol.com	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.wigtonmc.co.uk		

Summer Lanes Rally		Queens University (Belfast) MC		July
Event Type	Tests & Navigation			
Location				
Contact	Clifford Auld	028 9269 2670	hungryauld@btinternet.com	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.motor.club.qub.ac.uk/		

St Wilfrid's Classic Rally (C, E & N)		Ripon Motorsport Club		3rd August
Event Type	Tests, Navigation & Regularities			
Location	Ripon			
Contact	David Taylor		info@ripnmotorsportclub.co.uk	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.ripnmotorsportclub.co.uk		

Durham Dales Classic (C, E & N)		Durham Automobile Club		7th Septem-
Event Type	Tests Only			
Location	Nissan, County Durham			
Contact	Lindsay Burnip		poshbirdincontrol@sky.com	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.durhamautoclub.org.uk		

Doonhamer Classic Rally (C, E & N)		South of Scotland CC		20th September
Event Type	Tests and Navigational			
Location	Dumfries			
Contact	Roland Proudlock	07824 847383	rolandproudlock@annandalefinancial.co.uk	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.soscc.co.uk		

Solway Classic Weekend (C, E & N)		Wigton Motor Club Ltd		19th October
Event Type	Tests and Simple Navigation or optional Run			
Location	Cockermouth			
Contact	Graeme Forrester	01900 825642	graeme@gtforrester.freemove.co.uk	
Web Site	www.nescro.co.uk	www.wigtonmc.co.uk		

Gates Tyres Northern Historic Rally Awards

Events 2014

March 15th	Devils Own Classic Rally	KLMC
May 3/4th	Berwick Classic Rally	BDMC
June 29th	Lake District Classic Rally	WMC
Sept 7th	Durham Dales Rally	DAC
Sept 20th	Doonhamer Classic Rally	SoSCC
October 19th	Solway Autumn Classic Rally	WMC

I am pleased to say that Mike Garstang will be administrating the awards and giving out the stickers to WMC members on events. The best **five** events of six will be taken into account.

More Christmas Cracker Photos



GATES



Auto Services
more than TYRES

An illustration of various car parts including a wheel, two tires, and a toolbox.

Progress ?

It is almost 45 years since I proudly bought my first Jaguar – a 1958 Mk1 3.4 in Cotswold blue and it cost me £120 which even then was not a lot of money.

I was a penniless student and so when a big end went after a month, I either had to scrap the car or rebuild the engine. I was an articled clerk to a rather grand firm of Land Agents who, whilst paying me nothing, found it hard to understand why I had to take two weeks off instead of simply sending the car to a garage.

I had heard tales of how complicated twin cam XK units were and I was mindful of my ignorance but had little choice. The front of the car was almost off the ground before I realised that there was, a now bent, hidden engine mounting on top of the bell housing. When I took the big ends apart, I found brown paper between the back of the shell and one offending con rod. The chap I bought the car from swore blind that he hadn't done it and I believed him so as a bodge, it had worked quite well !

I had the con rod machined and fitted new shells and rings which was not difficult.

I ground the valves in but then, the proverbial “man in the pub” explained just how very complicated shimming the clearances was and that there was no way an amateur could possibly do it properly. But he would do it for £5 ! I got the head back, put it on and got the car running. After less than 1000 miles a valve burned out and she was running on 5 cylinders. I checked the clearances. No wonder she sounded quiet, there were no clearances at all on about half the valves. I think I probably burst into tears after all that work but a valuable lesson was learned. Don't trust strange men in pubs, do check that things are right before assembly and cock ups you can manage yourself.

I couldn't do any worse so I set to and did the clearances. Provided you can add and subtract and read a micrometer, it is not at all difficult, just time consuming.

However, the next problem was not so easy. For some reason, a piston picked up and scored the bore so badly that the block was scrap. Again, despair until I met a chap with a Mk2 who said he had a block lying outside the back of his garage which he regarded as a potential boat anchor. I could see why. The bores were full of water and the pistons well and truly seized but it was *free*. I filled it with diesel, disconnected the big ends and one by one moved the pistons with a large hammer and a block of wood. After a good rub with emery paper and paraffin, the bores still looked pretty doggy but I thought I would get way with it, so new rings, pistons back in and away it went until I eventually sold the car. By this time I was qualified as a Chartered Surveyor and the firm I was working for didn't think a rather battered Mk1 presented the right image. At the time, 'The Sweeny' wrecked two or three a week. I was issued with a Hillman Avenger – a horrid little car that I did my best to blow up.

The Mk1 was lovely in many ways but even at 12 years old, the tin worm had got a hold and her habit of developing rear wheel steering when towing a heavy trailer could be disconcerting. I was using her to tow my Healey 3000 to race meetings on a dreadful borrowed trailer but shoe string racing is a story for another time.

Fast forward through various H.W.M.s and Jaguars all with XK engines, to my present project which will seem sacrilegious to many and I don't necessarily disagree. Our XK140 roadster was becoming increasingly incontinent and the big bearing at the front of the gearbox was getting very noisy. The lack of syncro quite amused me as with a little practice, graunch free changes are still easy but my wife complains and I need her to drive when I fall asleep. My professional chum, Stuart Oliver, had a 4.2 block from a series 3 XJ6 lying about but without a head. I had already fitted a big valve head from such an engine so he persuaded me that a 4.2 lump with a 5 speed Tremec box would be good news. I thought we could clean things up, fit new rings and shells and screw it all together. Not a bit of it. If he was going to do the engine, it was going to be done right. Just about everything is new plus a re-bore and skimming the block and head. I cleaned up various bits ready to put back but was firmly told not to be so damned tight and that new 'whatevers' cost bugger all anyway.

Well the list of 'bugger alls' really adds up and the engine will be virtually new throughout. There is a well known firm that does budget rebuilds on XK engines for less than we can buy the proper bits for. Having seen some of their engines dismantled, I can understand how they do it and the results are probably OK if you rarely exceed 3000 rpm and use your car for gentle trips to the pub on dry Sundays so, provided their customers understand what they are getting, I see no problem.

But our cars have now become valuable which has perhaps taken some of the fun out of messing around with them and it has spawned a group of owners who hardly dare change a plug and who never learn anything useful about their cars. A proper rebuild is a bit daunting but routine servicing ought to be carried out on all XK owners. I can understand the concern about setting off on a 3000 mile trip across the continent, I've done it many times, but knowing roughly how the thing works gives some confidence and then you simply pay for "European get you home cover" and keep your legs crossed. After all, the old car doesn't know she's thousands of miles from home.

And as for progress, I have no doubt that the modern Jaguar is better in every conceivable way except one - at anything like legal speeds, they are so within themselves that they are generally dull but that can be said about most modern cars.

I have just been impressed by a 2.2 litre diesel X type, 6 speed manual - plenty of grunt, lots of gizzmos, very comfortable, amazingly economical and a brilliant everyday means of transport but just not involving or fun - after all, I don't suppose they weren't meant to be.

Years ago I ran a 1971 XJ6 4.2 everyday as my work car as well as tow car for my H.W.M Jaguar. She was then 15 years old and cost me £900. The lack of any further depreciation more than offset her prodigious thirst -16 mpg - and since then, progress has virtually halved the consumption of her modern equivalent but at a cost. I could service my 15 year old Jag then and was in with a chance if she 'failed to proceed'. I couldn't confidently service a modern one and at 15 years old, the electronics would probably make such a car impractical. That is why scrap yards are full of cars as young as 10 with sound bodies and engines but nightmarish electronics. My neighbour has a Jaguar XF - loves it. Great car but it is in the garage at the moment. Apparently the fuel filler flap is operated by an electric motor and this has failed - *What on earth was it doing there in the first place!* Is an electric fuel flap *really* an advantage? I am told some 5 year old Renaults are scrapped simply because an air bag has gone off! Not my idea of green technology. Melting them down to recycle might appease the Lib Dems but it uses a great deal of energy and emits a lot of carbon. A modern lorry is expected to do at least half a million miles so why don't we expect cars to do the same or at least a quarter of a million miles and 20 years which a few do but not many. Now that really would be progress!

Kirk Rylands

Welcome to the following new members:

We have pleasure in welcoming the following new members to the Club and we hope that you all enjoy our events and social activities.

Dave Nicolson	from Coulderton	Dave Weeks	from Keswick
Mike Livingstone	from Cockermouth	Roy Heath	from Hull
Owen Roberts	from Carlisle		

For most of you this will be your first magazine and we hope that you enjoy it and that you will take part in many of our activities

Autojumble

Buy, Sell, Exchange, Give!

Free to members

Renault 5 Turbo 2, 1984, Black/Beige, under 68K km, RHD conversion by J Price, rebuilt and unleaded 210 engine (6K km), Gotti Cup split rims, owned 15 years. 11 months MOT/Service, with 4 months tax. A genuine and little used car in very good condition. £25,000. For further details, please call 01360 440741



2 of Dunlop Weathermaster tyres brand new with studs. 14" 175 on wheels (possibly BMW). Offers, proceeds to BHF.
Ring Graeme on 01900 825642.



Garage tool trolley (30x18x30" approx) Brand new still in its packaging. Sturdy German made. £30
Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

Autobooks VW Beetle Workshop Manual, 68-43 all models including Karmann-Ghia £5. to BHF. Ring Graeme on 01900 825642

Black Sea Vista Holiday Property for rental: <http://www.blackseavista.com>

More Christmas Cracker Photos



WMC Events 2014

Month	Date	Day	Event	Status	Organisers
January	13th	Mon	"Rush" Film Show		
	25th	Sat	Awards Dinner		David Agnew
February					
March	9th	Sunday	Lunch Run		Charles Graves
	23rd	Sunday	Training Autotest		Committee
April	25-27		Getaway Gallop		Ron Palmer
May	7th	Wednesday	Grass Autotest	C	David Agnew
	14th	Wednesday	Pub Run		Graeme Forrester
	TBA		Forum		Paul Gilligan
June	4th	Wednesday	Pub Run		Kendall Bruce
	TBA		Autotest		
	29th	Sunday	Lake District Classic	C	sub committee
July	2nd	Wednesday	Pub Run		
	TBA		Autotest		Willie & Angela
August	6th	Wednesday	Pub Run		Charles Graves
	16th	Saturday	Rose & Thistle		Ron Palmer
	17th	Sunday	Classic Show		sub Committee
September	TBA		Autotest		
October	5th	Sunday	Kames Classic Sprint	NB	sub Committee
	19th	Sunday	Solway Historic Rally	C	sub Committee
November					
December	28th		Autotest		Steve Palmer

Rally Torque

News from Road & Stage

By all accounts the **Rally GB** was a much better event this year and made a big effort to attract the crowds. The question is - why was this not done some years ago? The very compact route format may be ideal for the teams who don't want their charges to go too far away from help, but ultimately the object of the event is to get lots of people to see the cars in action. There does seem a shortage of suitable stately homes in North Wales so why not spread the net a bit wider and have spectator stages at the circuits at Oulton Park and Ty Croes? They have the parking and facilities to deal with thousands of people.

It will be interesting to see if the new promoter can make more of the **WRC** next year. It will take years to get it back to the level of 20 years ago. It really needs more media coverage and with more teams next year and two British drivers we can but hope! I must admit to see Kris Meeke getting his chance at last, I rather thought time had passed him by as he always had a reputation of being quick but crashing. Let's hope he is now mature enough to get the car to the finish. It's great that Malcolm has given Elfyn Evans a chance and we may well have a rally winner in 2017 once he has a couple of years under his belt. Hopefully the media will not but him under too much pressure.

There will be no single venue rallies at **Charterhall or Albemarle** this year. Charterhall has just got too rough and the army has pulled the plug on Albemarle. It is also unlikely that the Lindisfarne Rally will run on Otterburn after being called off due to a shortage of entries.

The **Pirelli Rally** in early May has moved its base from Carlisle Race Course to the Carlisle United football ground in the hope of attracting more spectators. Certainly last year's event finish was attended by about twenty people at the Race Course. I am not sure if the football ground will be any better and it was also have a lot of congestion going to and from on Warwick Road. Ultimately the problem the BRC has is that the drivers are not household names even in motorsport households!

All rallies including road rallies have, by law a maximum average speed of 30mph. These days when you get parcels delivered by the major firms they send you an email saying when your package will arrive and they are usually very accurate. Talking to one of the drivers recently, he told me that they schedule, including drop offs, was based on a 35mph average. Could we have a new sort of rallying here? Everyone uses white vans and at each control you have to delivery a parcel and get it signed for!

Race Retro will see the biggest ever gathering of MG Metro 6R4s since they left the factory. Although Group B was curtailed before they were developed in the WRC, they had a long and successful career in national and clubby events. I will always remember having a ride in Willie Rutherford's British Championship winning car.

I was sorry to see that the **Grisedale Stages** had such a poor entry and nearly did not run. It's always been a classic event in one of the most famous forests in the UK, but while it had full entries until about six years ago, numbers have steadily slipped since then. Mind you I can remember when there were six major rallies in Keilder, now there are two plus the RAC. Famous names like the Lindisfarne and Centurion used to attract full 150 car entries and the Jim Clark no long uses forest stages.

Inside the Industry

Paul Gilligan keeps us up to date

Car Sales Continue To Recover

Unfortunately GTF demands my copy before December is over (and I'm late as I type) so I can only report scores to end November. Another good month in the UK, about 7% up on last November, and nearly 10% up for the year so far. BMW outsold Audi for the month but only by a few hundred cars so face a mountain to climb in December. The task looks impossible for BM, but I've recently been inundated by BMW offering their September pre-registered cars at big discounts, presumably looking to create space for the December pre-registrations they're about to do?

The real winner was Mercedes, over 3000 units behind BMW last November, under 1500 cars behind this November. So they've halved the gap, perhaps their promise to overtake BMW and Audi by 2015 is not as silly as it sounded a year ago? Mercedes are almost 19% up for the year, Audi 13% up, BMW 6% up – impressive from Merc.

The industry is now forecasting a total new cars sold (sorry – registered) this year of around 2.25M, 25% up on the low point about 4 years ago. Next year and 2015 are expected to show only a small growth from 2013, but most in the industry are much happier with life than they were a couple of years ago. One worry is that most of this year's sales will be coming back into the used market in 2 or 3 years time. If the economy isn't strong enough to generate high used car demand, used prices may drop significantly, a difficult one to manage.

European Sales Improving At Last

For the third month in succession European sales showed a growth over the same month last year, and now seem to have bottomed being less than 3% down for the full year. Over Europe as a whole VW have a commanding lead selling over 1.5M new cars with Ford second at just under 900,000. Again Mercedes perform best of the prestige brands catching their rivals rapidly. Skoda continue to do well. Now in the top ten for the first time.

Dealers Sitting On A "Timebomb"

I have mentioned before my doubts about the future of the big and very expensive showrooms manufacturers continue to demand from their dealers. The industry franchise system is unusual, manufacturers demand the investments, but it's the dealers who fund it. There is great concern that as customers' behaviour patterns change with much more use of the internet the facilities currently in place will be come obsolete as much of the High Street has, but many manufacturers are continuing to demand bigger and better showrooms, with the dealers forced to sign the cheques.

One industry analyst is now advising dealers to demand from the manufacturer a clear and credible 10 year view of how they see their distribution networks developing before committing to any significant property developments, and if this is not forthcoming proceeding with great caution.

Few of us could have envisaged 10 years ago just how many bank branches would now be pubs, wine bars, and restaurants. Quite what the alternative use might be for a big car showroom on an out of town site which had originally cost maybe £2m plus land I can only wonder? There is no question about the behaviour changes that are happening, and to me these changes are gathering pace rapidly. The analyst referred to above had described investing in facilities designed for the current model as "extremely risky" – who's to argue?

Electric Cars

BMW have just launched their first electric car, the i3. Reviews have been good and advance orders are said to be strong. However manufacturers have a habit of counting dealer orders for stock as "sold" when they are in fact only sold to the dealer, so we shall see. Again the car is not cheap at almost £26000 after the government grant for a car about the same size as the Kia Picanto which is available for about £7000.

Meanwhile controversy rages about the amount of money spent on establishing a network of charging points for electric cars. In London there are now 1392 such points, which cost £8.3M of public money to install. In the 3 months to end September this year only 349 were used AT ALL! In 3 whole months! Nationally there are 8600 publicly funded charging points, which is one for every two electric cars on the road. Some have no recorded use for over a year.

One voice of sanity has pointed out that if a fraction of the money spent on subsidising electric cars and paying for charging points had been spent on converting London's 20000 diesel taxis and 8500 diesel buses to electric power the environmental benefits would have been far higher.

Sounds far too sensible an idea to have any chance to me?

Less Really Is More

I read a very interesting article about the waste of resources involved in producing exotic cars that are capable of over 200mph. The writer made some telling points, like:

There are very few places, even racetracks, where these sorts of speeds can be experienced.

VERY few of the owners will be capable of safely handling the car at those speeds.

To reach those speeds bigger engines are required, which means more weight. Same applies to the transmission. The greater top speed and increased weight inevitably mean bigger wheels and tyres, all of this means bigger brakes.

The 155 mph car this theory goes is a far more sensible proposition, and add to that the fact that most of the 200mph supercars sold go straight into collections where the acceleration required is that of the value.

On the same then I've been reading road tests of the latest version of the Caterham 7, called for no obvious reason the 160. Of recent years Caterhams have been developed with bigger and bigger engines, with even these light cars putting weight as a result. To say nothing of prices of over £50000.

Now a new version has been developed at the request of the Japanese importer to comply with the *Kei* regulations that mean tax and parking exemptions in Japan's crowded cities. Rules are no more than 660cc, shorter than 3.4m and narrower than 1.48m. One third of all new cars sold in Japan comply with these regulations. For the 160 the power train including a live rear axle (narrow enough to meet the rules) is bought from Suzuki. For Japan there is a limit of 63bhp, but elsewhere a turbo is added to the 660cc 3 cylinder Suzuki clockwork to give a whole 80bhp. Of course the engine, gearbox, and axle weigh not much. 80 bhp means that skinny steel wheels suffice, even drum brakes at the rear. Tyres are 155 front, 165 rear. All the time saving in weight, and money, are adding up.

The result is a car that weighs 490kg, takes 6.5 seconds to get to 60, does 100mph, achieves 57mpg, emits only 114 grams of CO2 per km, and most of all is said by all who've had the pleasure to be enormous FUN to drive.

If you want to build it yourself it's £14995, built it's another £3000, then perhaps you'll have to dig a bit deeper if you want luxuries like a windscreen, doors and so on.

Sounds great?

Paul Gilligan

pg@gvcontracts.co.uk

More Le JOG Photos





Andy's Armchair

Andy Armstrong takes an irrelevant look at motoring and motorsport

Did you hear about the South African dyslexic who left a wreath propped up against the sign outside a garage that said Nissan Main Dealer? – Ouch!

It was good to see that Kris Meeke has got the opportunity of a Citroen works WRC drive for 2014. If you ask me he thoroughly deserves it and it also proves that sticking pins in an effigy (in this case of Robert Kubica during the Rally of Wales) really works.

2014 means the usual musical chairs in the Formula 1 firmament. As things stand at the time of writing it looks as though the likes of Perez, Maldonado and Massa have managed to buy themselves a seat for next year while Paul De Resta, more talented, but considerably poorer, has been left kicking his heels. It just devalues the whole thing, while not call it Formula rich?

During the last few weeks I've been reading various articles about Alan McNish, David Coulthard and Dario Franchitti. Now for those of you who don't follow racing these three are all absolutely world class drivers who have shone in F1, World Endurance and American Oval Racing, all are highly regarded and all share the common background that the Leslie's, father and son, late of Carlisle's Fiat dealership were very much instrumental in getting them solidly established on the lower rungs of the motor racing ladder. McNish actually said he shed tears on the slowing down lap of the race in Japan which secured him this year's world title as the date coincided with what would have been David's 60th birthday. I really don't think many people realise what an important part this family played and just what a brilliant driver David was. Certainly he would have made a genuine F1 front runner given half a chance.

It's nice to report another local who's having a lot of success in the international arena. This time it's Oliver Turvey from the Eden valley who if he had the "scratch" would be enjoying himself in F1 at the moment. For a while it seemed as though his talent was about to be wasted like so many others, but apparently he's doing a brilliant job in the European Le Mans series where he took 4 pole positions from 5 starts. Autosport magazine sees him as this year's "stand out" performer in the series so hopefully he can build on that in much the same way Anthony Davidson has in recent years, he certainly deserves to do well.

On the circuit front things look ever so slightly better for the prospects at Mallory as someone's meant to be putting money and effort in to try and keep it going. At the same time Lydden Hill in Kent, (only been there once over 30 years ago but a nice little track), is now having problems in that the club which organises most of their race meetings has had to pull the plug due to a dearth of entries over the last couple of years. Needless to say when the money isn't coming in things don't look good so we'll have to wait and see.

That's it for now, I've just been reckoning up and it must be at least 20 years I've been writing these ramblings, so after the editor I'm surely the club's most ancient waffler.

Ends

AA

What's On

WMC events and other events of interest

January

9-12		Autosport Show at the NEC
13th	WMC	"Rush" Film Show at the Kirkgate Cinema
19th	D&DMC	Jack Frost Stages at Croft.
25th	WMC	Annual Awards Night

February

21-23rd		Race Retro at Stoneleigh
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March

2nd	SRC	Saltire Classic Rally (Perth)
15th	KLMC	Devils Own Classic Rally (GTNHRA)
23rd	WMC	Speed Test Day at Rowrah
30th	MGC	Roof of England Challenge Tour

Visit the website for all the latest news

Forum Log in: wigtonmc. Password: marshals

Please only phone club officials between 19.00 and 21.00 in the evening.

Careers at M-Sport Limited

See all our vacancies online at

www.m-sport.co.uk

To apply for any of these roles, please forward an application form & medical history (available on the website) along with your CV, to Rachael Hook at M-Sport Ltd., Dovenby Hall, Dovenby, Cockermouth, Cumbria-CA13 0PN